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SETTLEMENT OF MICHIGAN TERRITORY

One of the most important influences in the settlement of Michigan territory was the war of 1812, which had effects both good and ill. Temporarily, it was a serious drawback. Fear of the Indians practically depopulated the territory during the war and the settlers returning found their homes in ruins.¹ The scarcity of money was a serious embarrassment both to business and to intending settlers. The general stagnation of business is said to have resembled that which followed the crisis of 1837.² The *Detroit Gazette* of August 9, 1822, contains a typical example of the many complaints against the continued scarcity of money and the low price of grain. One good effect of the war was to attract attention to Michigan through the prominent part taken by Detroit. It made evident the military need of better roads³ and led directly to the first improvements connecting Detroit with the Ohio valley. Many soldiers from Ohio, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and Virginia who had fought on the Michigan frontier remained in the territory as settlers and wrote to friends in the East about the opportunities the country afforded.⁴ One of these was Lewis Cass, who as governor of Michigan territory from 1813 to 1831 used his great energies to promote its settlement.⁵

An indirect result of the war of 1812 was the unfavorable report widely circulated about Michigan lands. In 1815, Ed-

¹ W. L. G. Smith, *Life and times of Lewis Cass* (New York, 1856), 107; *Journal of the legislative council*, 1826, p. 6; *American state papers: military affairs*, 1: 510; *Detroit Journal and Michigan Advertiser*, April 4, 1832, giving a report of a select committee of congress on the losses of Michigan during the war.

² *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 1: 381.

³ News of the battle of Tippecanoe on the Wabash just before the outbreak of the war, November 7, 1811, was not received at Detroit until a month later. *American state papers: Indian affairs*, 1: 780.

⁴ F. J. Turner, "The colonization of the West, 1820-1830," in *American Historical Review*, 11: 307; *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 23: 482.

⁵ A. C. McLaughlin, *Lewis Cass* (Boston, 1891), 127-129; J. H. Lanman, *History of Michigan* (New York, 1839), 236.

ward Tiffin, surveyor general for the Northwest, reported to the general government that there "would not be more than one acre out of a hundred, if there would be one out of a thousand that would, in any case, admit of cultivation;" for, he said, "the intermediate space between the swamps and lakes, which is probably nearly one half of the country, is, with a very few exceptions, a poor barren, sandy land, on which scarcely any vegetation grows, except very small scrubby oaks."⁶ The purpose of the survey upon which this report was based was to promote the early disposition of the Michigan bounty lands authorized by congress for compensation to the soldiers of the war.⁷ The surveyors could have known and may have been influenced, at least indirectly, by the unfavorable report made by Monroe to Jefferson prior to the organization of the Northwest territory, who after reconnoitering in parts of the Northwest wrote: "A great part of the territory is miserably poor, especially that near the Lakes Michigan and Erie. . . The districts, therefore, within which these fall will never contain a sufficient number of inhabitants to entitle them to membership in the confederacy."⁸

As a result of the Tiffin report President Madison recommended to congress, that since the lands in Michigan were so covered with swamps and lakes, or otherwise unfit for cultivation that only a small proportion could be applied to the intended grants, other lands should be designated to take the place of Michigan's proportion of the military bounty lands.⁹ Accordingly three-fourths of that amount were ordered to be surveyed in the rival state of Illinois.¹⁰ The government's disfavor towards Michigan lands doubtless became widely known, as the newspapers of the day emphasized the doings of congress, and as will appear later many eastern people were then specially anxious to know about the West. School geographies contained maps with

⁶ *American state papers: public lands*, 3: 164-165.

⁷ *Statutes at large*, 1: 728-730. For the relation of Cass to this survey, see McLaughlin, *Lewis Cass*, 94-95; A. C. McLaughlin, *The influence of Governor Cass on the development of the Northwest* (American Historical Association, *Papers*, 3), 315; T. M. Cooley, *Michigan* (Boston, 1885), 193. For newspaper characterization of the Tiffin report see an editorial in the *Detroit Gazette* for July 24, 1818.

⁸ J. Monroe, *Writings* (S. M. Hamilton, ed.—New York, 1898), 1: 117.

⁹ Special message of February 6, 1816.

¹⁰ *Statutes at large*, 3: 332.

the words "Interminable Swamp" across the interior of Michigan.¹¹ Morse's *Geography* which was considered an authority and was widely used featured this idea until a late period.¹² Morse's *Traveller's guide* represented sand hills "extending into the interior as far as the dividing ridge . . . sometimes crowned with a few stunted trees, and a scanty vegetation, but generally bare, and thrown by the wind into a thousand fantastic shapes."¹³

The immediate effects upon settlement were of course unfavorable. The traveler William Darby, writing from Detroit in August, 1818, says that during more than a month in which he had been traveling between Geneva, New York, and Detroit, he had seen hundreds going west, but "not one in fifty with the intention of settling in Michigan Territory."¹⁴ For the time being the tide of immigration turned aside from Michigan with its "interminable swamp" and "sand hills" and favored Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois.

One of the earliest and strongest influences to counteract these reports was the Lewis Cass expedition of 1820. Cass warmly criticised the Tiffin report, writing to the general government that the lands of Michigan had been "grossly misrepresented."¹⁵ Upon his motion new surveys were begun in the vicinity of Detroit in 1816 and public sales were opened for the surveyed portion in 1818. In the same year an exploring party apparently under his auspices dispelled illusions about the country back of Detroit.¹⁶ In 1819 national aid was secured for an extended examination of the soil, minerals, and Indian conditions over a route of some five thousand miles through the interior, accomplished in 1820.¹⁷ The result gave to men vitally

¹¹ *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 1: 381; 22: 542.

¹² Cooley, *Michigan*, 192-193.

¹³ J. Morse, *Traveller's guide* (New Haven, 1826), 169.

¹⁴ W. Darby, *A tour from the city of New-York to Detroit in the Michigan territory*. . . 1818 (New York, 1819), 200.

¹⁵ McLaughlin, *Influence of Cass on the development of the Northwest*, 347.

¹⁶ See an article in the *Detroit Gazette* for July 18, 1823, referring to the exploration of 1818 in the rear of Detroit, attributing the enterprise largely to the interest of Cass.

¹⁷ Smith, *Life and times of Lewis Cass*, contains much of the preliminary correspondence with Calhoun, then secretary of war, about the expedition. The official journal of the expedition kept by James Duane Doty, secretary of the territorial legislature of Michigan, is contained in *Wisconsin historical collections*, 13: 163 *et seq.*

connected with the government of the territory and influential with the national government a first-hand knowledge of the region where the Tiffin surveyors were supposed to have worked, and impressed upon them more firmly a lesson of the war of 1812, the need of a national military road between Detroit and Chicago. Since the expedition was made partly under national auspices, its report had a semiofficial character. The interest which it excited is indicated by the sale within thirty days of the entire edition of Schoolcraft's *Summary narrative*, published in 1821 at Albany, which is said to have found its way also to Europe.¹⁸

Accounts of travel through Michigan preceding Cass's expedition were on the whole too general to have much influence with settlers, yet there were some exceptions. Estwick Evans wrote in his *Pedestrious tour* in 1818: "In travelling more than four thousand miles, in the western parts of the United States, I met no tract of country which, upon the whole, impressed my mind so favorably as the Michigan Territory. . . . The soil of the territory is generally fertile, and a considerable proportion of it is very rich."¹⁹ Of "Travels" before 1837 the most important for the correction of false impressions about Michigan were those of McKenney, Hoffman, and Martineau. Some of the early guidebooks for travelers and settlers were very favorable to Michigan. An important one of these was by Samuel R. Brown, published at Auburn, New York, in 1817. There appeared in London in 1820 an anonymous *Guide for English emigrants to America* obviously based upon it.²⁰

See also Henry R. Schoolcraft's *Summary narrative of an exploratory expedition to the sources of the Mississippi river in 1820* (Albany, 1821). Good brief accounts may be found in McLaughlin's *Lewis Cass*, 115-119; J. V. Campbell, *Outlines of the political history of Michigan* (Detroit, 1876), 400-404; W. T. Young, *Sketch of the life and public services of General Lewis Cass* (Detroit, 1852), 85-88; *Detroit Gazette*, May 26, 1820.

¹⁸ *Outlines of the life and character of General Lewis Cass* (Albany, 1848), 24.

¹⁹ E. Evans, *Pedestrious tour*, 119, quoted from R. G. Thwaites, *Early western travels* (Cleveland, 1904-1907), 8: 220. Evans' work was published at Concord, New Hampshire, in 1819.

²⁰ The English *Guide* gives to Ohio thirty-five pages, to Indiana nineteen, to Michigan ten, and to Illinois nine. Compare pages 688, 689, 694 respectively with pages 155, 156-157, and 165 in S. R. Brown, *The western gazetteer* (Auburn, 1817). See also J. Melish's *A geographical description of the United States* (Philadelphia, 1818), 137, where the climate is described as "temperate and healthy" and the soil "gen-

Newspaper articles favorable to Michigan early found their way through the eastern press. For example the *New York Spectator* is quoted in the *Detroit Gazette* of March 21, 1823, as saying in regard to the belief that Michigan offered favorable opportunities to emigrants: "Perhaps no stronger argument can be urged in support of this belief than merely to state the fact that a barrel of potashes, flour, or other produce can be transported from Detroit to Buffalo with as little expense through Lake Erie as a like quantity can be transported by land in the western part of this state to the canal from places which lie twenty-five or thirty miles from the canal route."²¹ The motive which actuated at least some New York papers is seen in a quotation from the *Buffalo Journal* (1825): "When it is considered that all the fruits of that vast region are to reach the sea coast by Lake Erie and the New York Canal (the junction of whose waters is formed in our village) and that the corresponding returns of goods are to reach their destination by the same route, we may naturally be supposed to look with some degree of rapture on the present growth and increasing population of Michigan."²²

By about 1825 the effects of the Tiffin report in the East had begun to wane. That year is marked by the appearance of John Farmer's maps and gazetteers of Michigan published at Detroit, which it is said had by 1830 reached a demand in the local markets of Boston, Providence, Hartford, New York, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Washington, Albany, Rochester, Buffalo, Cleveland, and Erie, that could hardly be supplied.²³ Many copies of

erally rich and fertile." The ignorance of the interior is revealed by the statement that "in the center, the land is high, from whence there is a descent in all "directions," and an equal poverty of knowledge is revealed in the articles in the *Detroit Gazette* prior to 1820, which while they try to favor the lands are limited in descriptive matter to those close to the eastern shore. See for another instance the numbers of November 21, 1817, May 7 and 14, November 26, and December 3, 1819.

²¹ See other quotations in the *Detroit Gazette* for May 4, 1821; June 7, 1822; July 18, 1823; and September 19, 1823.

²² Quoted in the *Detroit Gazette*, September 20, 1825.

²³ S. Farmer, *History of Detroit and Michigan* (Detroit, 1890), 1: 335, 698. There is a photograph of the John Farmer map of 1826 in *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 38: opposite p. 636. A little before appeared Orange Risdon's map, a copy of which is in the same volume opposite p. 635. Risdon published much of his data, obtained by travel in the territory in 1823, in several eastern newspapers, according to the *Detroit Gazette*, January 16, 1824. Another map of about this time

the *Detroit Gazette*, founded at Detroit in 1817, had found their way to the East.²⁴ Other counter-influences were letters from successful pioneers, published in eastern papers, reports made by settlers revisiting their old homes in the East, the circulars of land speculators, and not least the later reports of the United States surveyors and their personal interest in promoting settlement. New editions of Morse's *Geography* were favorable to Michigan.²⁵ There is evidence in shipments of flour from Michigan to the East as early as 1833 and in the increase of population shown by the censuses of 1830, 1834, and 1837 that by the date of Michigan's admission to the union the popular opinion about her lands had been fairly reversed.

Along with the unfavorable reports about lands had gone ill tidings of the continued Indian depredations. The massacres at the river Raisin and at Fort Dearborn had impressed especially the minds of women and children and in 1832 the Black Hawk war caused rumors of a possible invasion of Michigan and of a rising of the Indians.²⁶ It would be true to human nature to suppose that these fears and desires would often cause the head of a family to hesitate about emigrating to Michigan, but in reality the spirit of the Michigan Indians was cowed by the American success in the recent war and their ferocity had largely burned out. The *Detroit Gazette* attempted to allay fears by setting forth the groundlessness of the prevalent anticipations of renewed Indian hostilities.²⁷

was made by Philu E. Judd, of which a copy is in the same volume opposite p. 634. The making of these maps is indicative of the new impulse to immigration which came about the time of the opening of the Erie canal.

²⁴ Other Detroit newspapers of the period were the *Michigan Herald*, the *Detroit Courier*, the *Detroit Journal and Courier*, the *Northwestern Journal*, the *Detroit Free Press*, the *Detroit Daily Advertiser*, and the *Detroit Journal and Michigan Advertiser*. For a list of Michigan newspapers for this period with critical comment see Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 1: 670-677. An account of the *Detroit Gazette* is given on pp. 671-672. The issue of the *Detroit Gazette* for November 21, 1823, states that six copies are sent weekly to subscribers in Washington.

²⁵ *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 4: 480-481.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ See editorial for April 3, 1818. Also a good general description of the character and condition of the Indians of eastern Michigan by a contemporary in the *Gazette*, February 8, 1822. For relations of the settlers and the Indians see Harriet Martineau, *Society in America* (London, 1837), 1: 329; 2: 25. *Detroit Gazette*, May 29, 1818, June 11, 1819; *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 38: 655-658;

The relation of the national government with the Michigan Indians was complicated by their dissatisfaction with the treaty of 1807, by their recent alliance with the British against the Americans, and by the belief of the Indians in the power and generosity of the British because of the continued distribution of large quantities of presents among them.²⁸ In 1829 sixty tons of presents were thus distributed in which the Michigan Indians shared.²⁹ This policy appears to have been followed as late as 1839, in attempts to defeat the American treaties with the Indians.³⁰ The situation required a government agent of great patience and tact who thoroughly understood the Indian character and who should have a genuine sympathetic interest. Cass possessed these qualifications in a marked degree and in his capacity as Indian agent rendered exceptional services to the settlement of Michigan, negotiating a score of treaties.³¹

The Indian title to the lower peninsula was with slight exceptions, extinguished by four treaties, those of 1807, 1819, 1821, and 1836. The so-called treaty of Detroit (1807) ceded southeastern Michigan, west as far as the principal meridian and north as far as a line running from a point on the western boundary of the present Shiawassee county northeasterly to White Rock, on lake Huron.³² In 1819 the treaty of Saginaw ceded a large part of central Michigan including the remainder of the Saginaw region and extending as far north as the headwaters of the Thund-

report of the surveyors of the Chicago road, *Detroit Gazette*, March 18 and 25, 1825. For the civil status of the Indian and his relation to the states of the union, see decisions cited in T. Donaldson's *Public domain* (Washington, 1881), 240.

²⁸ See a statement by Cass to the secretary of war, October 21, 1820, in Schoolcraft's *Summary narrative*, 280. The Indians are represented as generally friendly, but less so as the point of contact with the British is approached. See accounts of their visits to Malden in the *Detroit Gazette*, November 21, 1823; August 2, 1825. The latter contains a long editorial on the policy of the British.

²⁹ McLaughlin, *Influence of Cass on the development of the Northwest*, 323.

³⁰ McLaughlin, *Lewis Cass*, 108, 110.

³¹ Smith, *Life and times of Lewis Cass*, 128-130; *American state papers: Indian affairs*, 2: 224; Schoolcraft, *Summary narrative*, 79-80; R. B. Ross and G. B. Catlin, *Landmarks of Detroit* (Detroit, 1898), 358-359; L. M. Mathews, *Expansion of New England* (Boston, 1909), 231; Bureau of American ethnology, *Eighteenth annual report*, pt. 2, *passim*.

³² *Ibid.*, 674. Prior to this time there had been in the hands of the government only a narrow strip six miles wide along the water front extending from the Raisin to the vicinity of lake St. Clair, which was ceded in 1795. *Ibid.*, 654.

er Bay river.³³ Practically all the land still remaining south of the Grand river was ceded in 1821 by the treaty of Chicago,³⁴ and nearly all remaining north of it by the treaty of Washington in 1836.³⁵ In these treaties numerous small pieces of land were reserved to the Indian tribes and some grants were made to individuals of Indian descent.³⁶ The reservations were ceded as settlement pressed upon them, and the tribal Indians were removed to western reservations about 1840.³⁷

The most serious check upon settlement due to the Indians since the war of 1812 came from an uprising of the Sauk and Foxes under Black Hawk in 1832.³⁸ The Indians had just passed over the Chicago trail homeward bound from Malden where they had received their annual presents from the British, among them arms and ammunition. The circumstances suggested to Michigan settlers that as a natural maneuver the Indians would retreat along the Chicago road into Canada, as a safer base of operations, in which case there might be expected depredations along the road and possibly an uprising of the Potawatomi. Memories of Indian horrors spread panic especially among the women and children. Travel on the road fell off rapidly and intending settlers turned to Ohio.³⁹ A letter from a militia

³³ The southern boundary of the cession extended west from the prime meridian to the vicinity of Kalamazoo. Bureau of American ethnology, *Eighteenth annual report*, pt. 2: 698.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 702.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 756. For the principal minor treaties affecting the lower peninsula see *ibid.*, 699, 740, 764, and the *American state papers: Indian affairs*, 2: 72, 131, 677. The former contains colored plates showing the areas of the different cessions. There is a fairly accurate map showing the four larger cessions in *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 26: opposite p. 275.

³⁶ Bureau of American ethnology, *Eighteenth annual report*, pt. 2: 702; *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 26: 291.

³⁷ See report of Henry R. Schoolcraft, acting superintendent of Indian affairs, on the removal of the Indians from Michigan, in *Michigan joint documents*, 1841, no. 1, pp. 61-86. The question of removal was advocated by Isaac McCoy, of the Baptist mission near Niles, from the time white settlement began to encroach upon the mission. See his statement of the motives of removal in his *History of the Baptist Indian missions* (Washington, 1840), 265, 321, 323. See also an article by Lewis Cass on removal of Indians, in the *North American Review* for January 1830 (30: 62-121).

³⁸ There is a brief, judicial account of the Black Hawk war in *Magazine of Western History*, 5.

³⁹ *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 6: 239; 18: 606; 30: 456. H. P. Collins, *A twentieth century history and biographical record of Branch county, Michigan* (Chicago, 1906), 27, 29.

leader written in 1832 from White Pigeon in St. Joseph county, says: "The injury done to this part of the territory by the exaggerated reports of danger from the hostile bands of Indians will not be cured for two years to come, and the unnecessary movements of our militia are calculated to spread far and near this alarm." Michigan militia were mustered at Niles but they did not leave Michigan, as Black Hawk was defeated and captured by the United States troops before he reached Chicago when the resistance of his followers collapsed.⁴⁰

But the results of this outbreak for the settlement of Michigan were not wholly bad. Accounts of the "war" in newspapers, pamphlets, and books called attention to the country occupied by the Sauk and Fox Indians westward from Michigan, and the summary way in which the national government had demonstrated its control of the Indians gave renewed assurance to intending settlers, especially to foreigners, whose imaginations had exaggerated the danger from the Indians.⁴¹

The influence of the Black Hawk war is difficult to separate from that of the cholera epidemic of the same year. It was probably the cholera as much as fear of the Indians that checked travel on the Chicago road.⁴² A large part of the troops under Scott sent against Black Hawk died of cholera in and about Detroit, and others, panic stricken, deserted. It is estimated that half of the entire force died.⁴³ The ravages elsewhere in Michigan seem to have been equally severe. Many settlements established armed guards, allowing no one to pass in or out. Fences were built across the roads from Detroit, and travelers were halted at the point of the gun.⁴⁴

A very important task of the national government in the interests of settlement for which the extinction of Indian titles and the military protection of the frontier were preliminary

⁴⁰ *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 1: 234, 235.

⁴¹ H. F. Thomas, *History of Allegan county* (Chicago, 1907), 31.

⁴² Collin, *History of Branch county*, 30. There was a repetition of the epidemic in 1834, making a combination of influences that was felt until 1835. These epidemics spread westward from Asia, reaching Michigan through Canada.

⁴³ Campbell, *Political history of Michigan*, 440.

⁴⁴ *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 28: 169; Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 1: 49; Ross and Catlin, *Landmarks of Detroit*, 380-382; *Detroit Free Press*, July 19, 1832.

was the survey and sale of lands. Cass had accompanied his criticism of the Tiffin survey with urgent advice to the government for an immediate surveying of lands in the vicinity of Detroit and the establishment of a land office as soon as the surveys should advance far enough. A petition circulated at his instance and signed by prominent men in the territory in 1818 secured the government's attention, and public sales were opened in 1818.⁴⁵

By 1818 two years of work on the new surveys had made practically all the land in the present eastern shore counties ready for the market.⁴⁶ By 1821 more than two and a quarter millions of acres had been surveyed, and a decade later about ten million acres of the seventeen and a half million that had been ceded to the government.⁴⁷

As the surveys advanced and more land was ready for the market, new land offices were established; at Monroe in 1823, at White Pigeon in 1831, at Kalamazoo in 1834, and at Flint and Ionia in 1836. The first represents a movement of population into the country of the Raisin river valley, the second out along the Chicago road, the third along the territorial road, the

⁴⁵ Smith, *Life and times of Lewis Cass*, 113; McLaughlin, *Influence of Cass on the development of the Northwest*, 318; McLaughlin, *Lewis Cass*, 96. For phases of the land question prior to 1818 see *American state papers: public lands*, 1: 248, 267-269, 282.

⁴⁶ For brief descriptions of the rectangular system of survey in Michigan see H. F. Walling, *Atlas of Michigan* (Detroit, 1873), 6-7 — commonly known as Tackabury's *Atlas*, from the name of the publisher; J. T. Blois, *Gazetteer of Michigan* (New York, 1838), 65-70. Besides its obvious importance in enabling settlers to locate their lands, this system had significance for local government. The base line in Michigan follows along the northern boundary of Wayne county due west and forms the boundary between counties throughout its entire length. At distances of twenty-four miles on each side, other parallels form similar boundaries throughout most of their length. Eastern and western county boundaries are formed by meridians running at right angles, in many cases making counties almost exact squares. Similarly, parallels and meridians divide the counties into squares of six miles on a side, forming "government townships" which in most cases have become units for township governments. This result was secured by the policy of following the township lines in establishing the original areas for township government, however unequal these areas might be, which makes easier the use of the organization of township government to measure, in a general way, comparative rates of settlement in different areas.

⁴⁷ *American state papers: public lands*, 3: 533; *Historical and scientific sketches of Michigan* (Detroit, 1834), 165. The field notes of the surveyors, deposited at Lansing in 1857 upon the completion of the survey of Michigan, are of first importance for early physiographic conditions.

fourth into the Saginaw valley, the fifth into the Grand river region.⁴⁸ The opening of the land office at Kalamazoo in 1834 marks the beginning of a new period in the settlement of western Michigan.⁴⁹

The laws regulating the sales of land in Michigan before 1820 were not conducive to the best interests of settlement. The claims of the squatter were not only not recognized but his land and improvements were legally liable to forfeiture.⁵⁰ The settler of small means was at a decided disadvantage, since the lands were sold only in comparatively large parcels and at auction to the highest bidder. The fact that land could be bought on credit encouraged speculation, and the best land would tend to go into the hands of a few men of large actual or prospective means. The family man of small means with intention to settle was not likely to speculate even on credit, since his death or the deferment of payments for other reasons would forfeit both lands and improvements. He was more likely to await his chance at the expiration of the given term of sale, when the unsold lands would be put on the market at two dollars an acre, fifty cents at the time of entry and the balance in one, two, and three years, with interest.⁵¹ In order to avoid the cost and difficulties of collecting arrears and check speculation, to open the best land on equal terms to all, to avoid the poor man's having to forfeit lands for deferred payments and to enable him to buy in small parcels, the credit system was by act of congress (1820) to be discontinued; ⁵² all lands were to be sold at \$1.25 the acre and in parcels as small as eighty acres.

⁴⁸ For jurisdiction see Blois, *Gazetteer of Michigan*, 71-73; *Detroit Gazette*, July 18, 1823; Risdon's map of Michigan (1825).

⁴⁹ *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 18: 612.

⁵⁰ *Magazine of Western History*, 6: 397.

⁵¹ Donaldson, *Public domain*, 203-205; *History of Oakland county* (Philadelphia, 1876), 130; *Detroit Gazette*, May 8, 1818.

⁵² *Statutes at large*, 3: 566. See a monograph by Emerich, on "The credit system and the public domain," in Vanderbilt Southern Historical Society, *Publications*, no. 3, quoted by Mr. Turner in "The colonization of the West," in *American Historical Review*, 11: 313, n. 2. The *Detroit Gazette* of September 24, 1819, hints at a condition which may have stimulated the repeal of the credit system. A writer signing himself "Franklin" suggests that the immense indebtedness of the people of the West to the government for the land, due to the credit system, may form cause for separation from the union to escape the debt; especially if the people are shown that the original states had no right to the land and that the West is eminently fitted for independence.

It still remained to give legal protection to the squatter. The squatter was the extreme advance guard of settlement whose services often took the keen edge from the hardships of later comers accustomed to the settled life of an old community. In a rude way, by a custom that had the effect of law, the squatters instituted a degree of self-protection. A settler who would disregard the right of a squatter to purchase his claim when it came on the market would soon find it unpleasant to stay in the community.⁵³ But the speculator was not easily made amenable to this custom and often took advantage of his immunity to beat the squatter out of a home. Congressional attention to this abuse began effectively with the preëmption act of 1830.⁵⁴

It would be expected, under the influence of the Erie canal, the acceleration of steam navigation on lake Erie, and the survey of the Chicago road, that sales would rapidly increase from 1825 to 1830. What took place was quite the opposite.⁵⁵ The sales at the Detroit land office may be taken as typical. In 1820 there were sold at that office 2,860 acres, and sales ran rapidly up from 7,444 acres in 1821 to 20,068 in 1822. The increase continued until 1825, when they reached 92,332 acres. From this point there was a steady falling off until 1830 when 70,441 acres were sold, but with a sudden impulse sales mounted in the following year to 217,943 acres. Then probably under the influence of the Black Hawk war and the epidemics of cholera in 1832 and 1834, there was a gradual decline until 1835 when sales suddenly leaped to 405,331 acres, and in 1836 to nearly one and a half million acres.⁵⁶ In the year 1835-1836 Michigan shared in a phenomenon of increased land sales that was national in extent, and

⁵³ *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 6: 424; L. H. Glover, *A twentieth century history of Cass county, Michigan* (Chicago, 1906), 107.

⁵⁴ Donaldson, *Public domain*, 214, 215. There is a brief treatment of "The national preemption system," in *Magazine of Western History*, 6: 396-399.

⁵⁵ The amounts of sale for the whole territory from 1830-1834 were: 1831: 252,-211.44 acres; 1832: 316,081.89 acres; 1833: 447,780.17 acres; 1834: 351,951.32 acres. (*American state papers: public lands*, 6: 628; 7: 329-330.) The *Detroit Gazette* of June 20, 1826, attributes the falling off in amount of purchases in 1826 to hard times in the East, making it difficult for intending emigrants to convert their produce and property into ready money. A retardation of immigration due to this cause was anticipated in the same paper for May 23, 1826.

⁵⁶ Blois, *Gazetteer of Michigan*, 74; J. P. MacCabe, *Directory of the city of Detroit* (Detroit, 1837), 86. Obviously the amount of sales given by Blois for 1833 is an error, probably typographical.

the largest total of sales was made in Michigan.⁵⁷ This seems plausibly explained by the comparatively small amount of land remaining unsold in the older areas and the comparatively slight knowledge of lands farther west; also by the stage of Michigan's settlement, her lands being accessible with comparative ease and well enough known to be properly valued.⁵⁸

There was undoubtedly a large element of speculation in these purchases even before 1835. According to an apparently authoritative account speculation had reached only "a gentle breeze" in 1834, but increased "to a gale in 1835, to a storm in 1836, to a change of wind and an adverse tornado in 1837."⁵⁹ A serious financial crisis as a result of Jackson's financial policy appears to have been anticipated in Michigan as early as 1833. "We regret to find," says the editor of the *Detroit Journal and Michigan Advertiser*, November 27, "that a general feeling of apprehension is felt and expressed by the city papers, of serious embarrassment in the money market." Other editorial protests and prophecies followed.⁶⁰ But money, in bank notes,⁶¹ became as plentiful "as strawberries in June"⁶² and everybody continued to seem prosperous. Banks were chartered at all the principal centers of settlement and increased in number rapidly after the general banking law of 1837.⁶³ Under this law, which among other things provided "that whenever any person or persons, resident of this State, shall be desirous of establishing a bank, such person or persons shall be at liberty to meet without interruption, open books and subscribe to the capital stock of such bank," much unscrupulous swindling appears to have taken place. Many banks, whose promoters had little or no intention of redeeming their notes, were set up at points difficult to reach or to find; capital was often not paid in; notes were issued in

⁵⁷ Donaldson, *Public domain*, 215, 216; R. Adams, "Agriculture in Michigan," in Michigan Political Science Association, *Publications*, 3: 173.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 4: 174.

⁶⁰ For example, the *Detroit Journal and Michigan Advertiser*, April 9, 1834; the *Detroit Journal and Courier*, September 12, 1835.

⁶¹ See description of the "financial zoology" of the time — wild cat, red dog, etc. — in *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 1: 190; and *History of Hillsdale county* (Philadelphia, 1880), 41.

⁶² See Harriet Martineau's experience, June, 1836, in *Society in America*, 1: 327.

⁶³ *Session laws*, 1838, p. 24.

gross excess; security was frequently poor, or not furnished; and the bank inspectors were imposed upon by all sorts of trickery.⁶⁴

The crisis was precipitated in the East by the issue of Jackson's specie circular on July 11, 1836. The effect was not long in reaching Michigan. The *Detroit Daily Advertiser* of October 15 observes that "the banks of Detroit do not discount the best paper which is offered. This has been the case for several months past." Public officers were authorized by the circular to receive only coin; bank notes therefore would not buy government land. But the real crisis came when Michigan banks, in 1837, began to suspend specie payments⁶⁵ and rapidly to fail. Bank notes became so valueless that in grim humor some investors who but a little while before were supposedly rich used them for wall paper.⁶⁶ Land became a drug on the market and panic prices prevailed.⁶⁷ The laboring and farming classes appear to have been the heaviest losers, not having the means to keep abreast of news regarding the condition of the banks.⁶⁸ But the crisis was not an unmixed evil for settlement. The immense speculations and immigrations of the period stimulated by easy money had brought great numbers of settlers before the crash came who still remained to aid the new state to recover from disaster and help build a prosperous commonwealth.

Even more striking than land sales, as illustrating the rate of settlement in Michigan, are the very rapid changes that were made in the means of transportation, both from the East to Michigan and from the lake shores to the interior. A period within a dozen years witnessed a transformation from the birch-bark canoe to steam navigation on the great lakes, and from the Indian trail to the railroad.⁶⁹ While such changes were partly

⁶⁴ *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 38: 160. See also *ibid.*, 32: 254; *Magazine of Western History*, 3: 202; Cooley, *Michigan*, 268-269; Ross and Catlin, *Landmarks of Detroit*, 439.

⁶⁵ H. M. Utley and B. M. Cutcheon, *Michigan as province, territory and state* (New York, 1906), 3: 88.

⁶⁶ According to tradition, Louis Campau of Grand Rapids papered the cupola of his house with them saying: "If you won't circulate, you shall stay still." *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 30: 294. See also *ibid.*, 22: 547.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 38: 368-369; *History of Hillsdale county*, 42.

⁶⁸ *Michigan as province, territory and state*, 3: 105; Cooley, *Michigan*, 272-273.

⁶⁹ *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 9: 165.

a cause of settlement they were largely the result of the demands of settlement, actual as well as prospective.⁷⁰

The navigation of the great lakes by steam marks a new era in the settlement of Michigan. Significant was it that the first steamboat from Buffalo arrived at Detroit in 1818, the year of the opening of public land sales there. According to the *Detroit Gazette* for June 2 and 23, 1820, the usual time from Buffalo to Detroit was two and a half days and the fare fifteen dollars. The fare from Detroit to Mackinac was twenty dollars. The trip could be made from Boston to Detroit in fifteen days. The *Gazette* of May 8, 1818, states the cost of transporting goods from Albany to Detroit as four dollars and a half per hundred weight. In 1825-1826 there came a sudden impulse, apparently due to the opening of the Erie canal, when the number of steamers on lake Erie increased from one to six.⁷¹ In 1836 ninety steamers are said to have arrived at Detroit in May bearing settlers to Michigan and the West.⁷²

The growth of steamboat travel may be measured by the number of passengers. The first trip of *Walk-in-the-Water* in 1818 brought to Detroit twenty-nine passengers. The *Superior*, which took her place after she was wrecked in 1821, brought ninety-four passengers in 1822.⁷³ In 1830, from April 1 to May 12, twenty-four hundred intending settlers were landed at Detroit.⁷⁴ In the following year in one week, in May, steamboat

⁷⁰ There is a good general survey of the early improvements of transportation in Michigan in R. Adams, "Agriculture in Michigan," in Michigan Political Science Association, *Publications*, 3: 177-183. The *Detroit Gazette* of April 9, 1824, laments the small interest in road building, affirming that roads are improved only where absolutely necessary and there only enough to make them barely passable. For use of the canoe on Michigan waters see *Magazine of Western History*, 11: 389, 390; *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 3: 125. See J. L. Ringwalt, *Development of transportation systems in the United States* (Philadelphia, 1888), 5-15 for the early systems of water transportation. For the French Canadian pony cart and ox team see *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 1: 383-384; 22: 487; *Magazine of Western History*, 6: 391.

⁷¹ Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 1: 909. Another account gives three for 1827. *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 35: 273. There is a good treatment of navigation on lake Erie before 1829 in *ibid.*, 4: 79.

⁷² Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 1: 909.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ *Detroit Journal*, May 12, 1830, quoted in Michigan Political Science Association, *Publications*, 4: 521.

arrivals numbered about two thousand.⁷⁵ In 1834 in one day, October 7, there arrived at the same port nine hundred passengers.⁷⁶

The growing importance of the region of the great lakes is reflected in tourist's guidebooks. It was about 1830, apparently, when the trip on the great lakes began to be considered worth while by tourists, but not until about 1837 do we find it very heartily recommended.⁷⁷ Lake navigation was considerably hampered by the necessity of closing down for some four or five months in the winter.⁷⁸ Usually, boats began to arrive at Detroit from Buffalo the last of April or the first of May,⁷⁹ and continued to arrive until late in November.

The settlement of the western part of Michigan was much aided by the comparative ease of transportation afforded by lakes Huron and Michigan, especially for household goods and heavy merchandise. Goods were landed at the river mouths and thence transported in canoes, pole boats, or small steamers up the rivers. *Walk-in-the-Water*, in 1819, took freight and passengers to Mackinac,⁸⁰ a trip that was widely anticipated with much curiosity. The *Detroit Gazette* of May 14, 1819, quotes from a New York paper: "The swift steamboat Walk-in-the-Water is intended to make a voyage, early in the summer, from Buffalo, on Lake Erie, to Michilimackinac on Lake Huron, for the conveyance of company. The trip has so near a resemblance to the famous Argonautic expedition in the heroic ages of Greece, that expectation is quite alive on the subject. Many of our most distinguished citizens are said to have already engaged their passage for this splendid adventure." There was subsequently a considerable commerce by steam on the upper lakes.⁸¹ According to an editorial in the *Detroit Journal and Courier* of July 1, 1835, "a trip on the upper lakes at this season

⁷⁵ *Detroit Free Press*, May 19, 1831, quoted in Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 1: 335.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ E. Channing and M. T. Lansing, *Story of the great lakes* (New York, 1909), 268.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 268, 271; *Detroit Daily Advertiser*, December 20, 1836.

⁷⁹ *Detroit Gazette*, May 12, 1820; May 18, 1821; April 4, 1823; April 2, 1824.

⁸⁰ Campbell, *Political history of Michigan*, 400.

⁸¹ *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 21: 336. For boats on lake Michigan see the *Detroit Gazette* of August 29, 1817, which announces the intended departure of the schooner *Hercules* for Mackinac and Chicago. The same paper for

has become quite fashionable. The establishment of a regular line of first rate Steam Boats between Buffalo and Chicago affords a fine opportunity for travellers to visit the rich scenery so beautifully described by Cass, Schoolcraft and others.”⁸²

The opening of the Erie canal, completing an all-water route between Michigan and the Atlantic ocean, gave to lake navigation and to western settlement a new impulse. This canal was begun about the time that *Walk-in-the-Water* arrived at Detroit, and opened to traffic seven years later.⁸³ It is very probable that settlement was largely stimulated by anticipation of what this would mean.⁸⁴ The significance of it for the settlement of Michigan was that it changed the direction of western emigration from the Ohio valley to the line of the canal and the great lakes.⁸⁵ Michigan would therefore profit directly from the interception of many settlers who had originally intended to go farther west. Especially would this be favored by the national survey of the Chicago road about the same time. Transportation on the canal was comparatively cheap,⁸⁶ and great numbers of New England and New York pioneers who came to Michigan after 1825 speak of having used the canal boat to Buffalo.

The favorite route overland from the east to lake Erie was

May 18, 1821, says that fourteen schooners recently left Detroit laden with merchandise and produce for Michilimackinac and ports on lake Michigan. The *Northwestern Journal*, December 2, 1829, records a trip by the schooner *Detroit* from Chicago to Detroit in twenty-three days. The first mention of a steamboat trip on lake Michigan was one to Green Bay in 1830, mentioned in the *Northwestern Journal* for July 14, 1830. See also *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 12: 317; 30: 573 *et seq.*; Collin, *History of Branch county*, 34; Turner, “The colonization of the West,” in *American Historical Review*, 11: 312.

⁸² Harriet Martineau, however, made the trip from Chicago to Buffalo in June, 1836, in the sailing vessel, *Milwaukee*, which she says was the only sailing vessel available. *Society in America*, 2:2.

⁸³ Channing and Lansing, *Story of the great lakes*, 251-265. The *Detroit Gazette* for August 16, 1817, quoting from the *Albany Daily Advertiser*, notes that work is progressing on the Erie canal — “The Grand Western Canal.” Five hundred men are reported at work.

⁸⁴ T. E. Wing, *History of Monroe county, Michigan* (New York, 1890), 200.

⁸⁵ Collin, *History of Branch county*, 33. The effect of the greater capacity of the canal and lake transportation was such that the northern route had taken precedence over the southern by about 1832, as shown by the transportation of troops for the Black Hawk war. *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 38: 145.

⁸⁶ Turner “The colonization of the West,” in *American Historical Review*, 11: 312.

by way of the Mohawk and Genesee turnpike,⁸⁷ from the terminus of which the traveler might take his choice of routes along either the northern or southern shores of lake Erie. In both cases he would have to cross the many streams flowing into the lake from either side, and would be aided little by bridges.⁸⁸ Swamps, if not numerous, were not scarce. Little improvement seems to have been made in the Canadian route since Sir William Johnson required in 1761 thirty-nine full days to move a small body of troops in the most favorable season from Niagara to Detroit.⁸⁹ General Hull, approaching from the other direction in 1812, moved his troops but an average of four miles a day from the rapids of the Maumee to Detroit.⁹⁰

In the improvement of Michigan rivers and in attempts to build canals, not very much was done before 1837, but in the years immediately following a very great number of such improvements were undertaken by the territorial and state governments of Michigan. That such elaborate attention should be given to canal and river navigation can be understood best in the light of the success of the Erie canal and of the difficulties attending land transportation before the day of the railroad.⁹¹

The first improvements of roads in Michigan were made by the national government for military purposes. The earliest of these, naturally, were made where the need seemed greatest. The war of 1812 had taught the strategic importance of connect-

⁸⁷ Turner, "The colonization of the West," in *American Historical Review*, 11: 311. In *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 38: 591-592, is given a good brief discussion of early routes from the east to the central west. See also *ibid.*, 38: 142.

⁸⁸ *Magazine of Western History*, 2: 578-580.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 579. Compare a trip made by lumber wagon in 1835. F. Ellis, *History of Livingston county* (Philadelphia, 1880), 138.

⁹⁰ *Magazine of Western History*, 2: 580.

⁹¹ The completion of the Erie canal set other states to making canals often when there was little chance of successful operation. (Ringwalt, *Early transportation*, 45, 46.) The *Detroit Gazette* of February 4, 1835, gives an account of a public meeting in Detroit to consider the project of a canal "from Cranberry Marsh or some other eligible point." The same paper for June 12, 1827, gives a long report of a town meeting held at Dexter, in Washtenaw county, to consider the prospect for a canal from Detroit to lake Michigan. The attention of congress was called to that project in 1830 by Hon. John Biddle, according to the *Northwestern Journal* of February 10, 1830. See Governor Mason's message in *Michigan house journal*, 1837, p. 12, for routes recommended for canals in Michigan; for the Saginaw canal, *Michigan house documents*, 1837, no. 9, p. 17; for the Clinton and Kalamazoo canal, *ibid.*, (G), 68.

ing Detroit with the Ohio valley. The first road established therefore in 1818 extended from Detroit through Monroe to the rapids of the Miami. The first line of stages began to run over this road shortly after the Erie canal was opened.⁹² By 1830 there was a continuous road though of very primitive character, along the entire water front south of lake Huron.⁹³

The earliest road inland was that built over the Saginaw trail to connect Detroit with a point favorable for a military post among the Indians near the head of Saginaw bay. A road over this route was contemplated by Cass as early as 1815.⁹⁴ A stage line seems to have begun regular trips over it from Pontiac to Detroit in 1826.⁹⁵

The most important of the inland routes in this period was the Chicago road, which grew out of the military need of connecting the forts at Detroit and Chicago. This road in its service to settlement was practically an extension of the Erie canal and was to become a great axis of settlement in southern Michigan.⁹⁶

⁹² Wing, *History of Monroe county*, 137. See Cass's letter to the war department in *American state papers: miscellaneous*, 2: 596; also the *Detroit Gazette* of January 30, 1818, urging a national road between Detroit and Sandusky. The condition of travel on that route in 1818 is described by Estwick Evans, from personal observation, in Thwaites, *Early western travels*, 8: 209. The position of the first road is shown on the Risdon map of 1825 as running from one to three miles from the shore. Apparently its improvement was very slow. Monroe citizens complained in 1822 that it was almost impassable for wagons even in good weather on account of logs, stumps, and deep holes, in fall and spring almost impassable on horseback. (*Detroit Gazette*, April 19, 1822. See Cass's description of its condition in 1826; *ibid.*, January 31, 1826.) The stage line started that year appears to have been soon obliged to discontinue. (*Ibid.*, August 15, 1826.) It had carried passengers from Detroit to Ohio since February apparently at the rate of four cents a mile. (*Ibid.*, February 7, 1826.) Another stage line, carrying passengers at six and a fourth cents a mile, between Detroit and Monroe, seems to have begun immediately on the failure of the old one. *Ibid.*, August 22, 1826.

⁹³ *Northwestern Journal*, January 6, 1830. Three stages a week appear to have been running between Detroit and Mt. Clemens by 1834. *Detroit Journal and Michigan Advertiser*, March 26.

⁹⁴ Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 1: 925.

⁹⁵ *Michigan Herald*, April 5, 1826. A number of stage lines were started that year, apparently indicating the impulse to immigration given by the Erie canal. See the *Detroit Gazette* of that year for February 7, April 4, and May 23.

⁹⁶ Collin, *History of Branch county*, 25, 42. For the services of Lewis Cass and Father Gabriel Richard in behalf of this improvement see *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 1: 37; 6: 238; 21: 440; *Statutes at large*, 4: 135; editorial comment in the *Detroit Gazette* of May 14, 1824.

The route chosen was marked out by the old trail which the Indians had beaten hard in their annual visits from the west to receive British presents at Malden.⁹⁷ The road ran from Detroit in almost a direct line to Ypsilanti, entering Lenawee county and bending there nearly due west; thence entering Hillsdale county it passed through it and Branch county in a southwesterly direction to St. Joseph county, and threading the southern part of St. Joseph and Cass counties left the territory through the southwestern corner of Berrien.⁹⁸ The stage companies improved the roads enough to get their coaches through, but it was not until after the Black Hawk war that serious work was done on it by the government as far west as Cass county.⁹⁹ Harriet Martineau says of the road between Detroit and Ypsilanti in 1836: "Juggernaut's car would have been 'broke to bits' on such a road"; beyond Jonesville in Hillsdale county it was "more deplorable than ever."¹⁰⁰ Occasionally all had to dismount and walk, and then "such hopping and jumping; such slipping and sliding; such looks of despair from the middle of a pond; such shifting of logs, and carrying of planks, and handing along the fallen trunks of trees!" A writer in the *Detroit Daily Advertiser* of December 24, 1836, says of the Detroit end of the road: "The road from this to Ypsilanti looks at certain times as if it had been the route of a retreating army, so great is the number of wrecks of different kinds which it exhibits."

The territorial government authorized several roads in this period, the most important of which was the "territorial road," a name apparently given to distinguish it from the national turnpike. This was also early known as the St. Joseph's road, from the Indian trail through the Kalamazoo valley whose line it

⁹⁷ *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 8: 195; Collin, *History of Branch county*, 35.

⁹⁸ *Michigan Herald*, June 14, 1825; *Detroit Gazette*, December 13, 1825; Risdon's map of Michigan (1825); Farmer's map of Michigan (1835). For the condition of the road at different times see *Northwestern Journal*, January 6, May 20, 1830; *Detroit Journal and Michigan Advertiser*, March 30, 1831, October 26, 1831; *Detroit Free Press*, November 3, 1831; *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 1: 48; 2: 389. See also items and advertisements in the *Detroit Journal and Michigan Advertiser* for March 30, May 11, and June 1, 1831. The rate of passenger transportation appears to have been four cents a mile.

⁹⁹ Glover, *History of Cass county*, 166.

¹⁰⁰ *Society in America*, 1: 318, 322, 325, 326.

followed approximately.¹⁰¹ It was authorized in 1829.¹⁰² Its supposed importance for settlement is indicated in a report to Governor Cass made by the commissioners who laid out its course in 1830: "To show that this must be the most important road in the Territory it is only necessary to state its course is direct from Detroit to the mouth of the St. Joseph, and the distance thirty miles less than by the Chicago road — that it passes near the center of the peninsula, through a rich tract of country, and no less than seven county centers, while the Chicago road takes a more circuitous route near the Indiana line, studiously avoiding county centers."¹⁰³ A stage line appears to have been established in 1834, to connect with steamboats about to begin running from St. Joseph to Chicago; it was proposed to make the entire distance from Detroit to Chicago in five days.¹⁰⁴ The condition of the road at the close of this period was apparently not as good as that of the Chicago road, and apparently not as much traveled. Harriet Martineau, who passed along the Chicago road in going west from Detroit in June, 1836, intended to take the "upper road" returning, but received news at Chicago that it had been made impassable by the rains. She returned by the lakes, the rest of the party by the Chicago road.¹⁰⁵

The agitation in Michigan for railroads began surprisingly early, and a number were chartered by the territorial government, a significant comment on the rate of settlement and the enterprise of the settlers. Stephenson's *Rocket* was still in the experimental stage in England,¹⁰⁶ and only a few miles of railroad had been built in the most enterprising sections of the eastern states. Articles on these railroads began to appear in the

¹⁰¹ See Risdon's map (1825).

¹⁰² *Territorial laws*, 2: 744.

¹⁰³ The *Northwestern Journal*, April 21, 1830. See also a description of the advantages along its route in the same paper for May 5, 1830. These notices undoubtedly helped to attract attention to the settlement of the Kalamazoo valley.

¹⁰⁴ *Detroit Journal and Michigan Advertiser*, June 4, 1834.

¹⁰⁵ *Society in America*, 2: 2. Mr. Lew Allen Chase has made a judicious selection of material to illustrate the larger features of the roads, travel, and traffic in Michigan during the territorial period in *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 38 593. See *Session laws*, 1835-1836, pp. 90-102, for some sixty roads authorized by the legislature.

¹⁰⁶ *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 1: 132.

Detroit papers in 1830, and charters were from that time sought from the territorial government, doubtless in some instances by speculators for the purpose of encouraging the sale of lands along a proposed route or at a proposed terminal. The charter of 1830 to the Pontiac and Detroit railway company is the oldest in the Northwest territory.¹⁰⁷ "We advise those capitalists," says the *Detroit Courier* of August 7, 1833, "who have been so grievously disappointed in consequence of not obtaining stock in the Utica and Schenectady railroad to bring hither their funds and forthwith take preliminary steps to invest the same in a railroad from Detroit to Chicago." An editorial in the same paper for October 30 comments on the rapidly increasing travel between Detroit and Ypsilanti and the bad condition of the wagon road as cogent reasons for a railway between those points.

But before much had been done on that line, enterprising men of Adrian and Port Lawrence (Toledo), began active preparation for rail connections between lake Erie and the navigable waters of the Kalamazoo river. Immigration through Port Lawrence was increasing, and the idea of directing its course through Lenawee county as well as reducing the price of imports and giving an easier outlet for farm products, formed a powerful incentive to action. So bad was the road then existing between these points, it was said, that wagons would often plow to the box in the mud, from which the oxen could scarcely extricate them.¹⁰⁸ The first cars over this first railroad in Michigan were operated in 1836, by horse power, but the effect on the price of commodities was immediate. For example, Syracuse salt fell from fifteen dollars to nine dollars per barrel, and other heavy supplies in proportion.¹⁰⁹

In 1834 was surveyed the line of the Detroit and St. Joseph railroad, approximately along the line of the territorial road.¹¹⁰ Undoubtedly the success of the Erie and Kalamazoo railroad from Adrian to Toledo, giving the interior an outlet in that di-

¹⁰⁷ Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 1: 893; *Territorial laws*, 3: 844.

¹⁰⁸ *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 38: 493, 499.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 492. The financial stress following 1837 hopelessly bankrupted the road, and in 1848 it was leased in perpetuity to the Michigan Southern railroad company.

¹¹⁰ *Michigan house documents*, 1837, no. 9, p. 2; and no. 9 (B), 29, 31. See description of the route in the *Detroit Journal and Courier*, July 8, 1835. This was the beginning of the later Michigan Central railroad.

rection and appearing to endanger the commercial interests of Detroit, did much to hasten the work on the St. Joseph road.¹¹¹ When it was taken over by the state in 1837 nearly one hundred and seventeen thousand dollars had been expended on it, for which there had been done thirteen miles of grading and most of the clearing and grubbing between Detroit and Ypsilanti.¹¹² Contemporary appreciation of the importance of this road is shown by its completion to Ypsilanti in 1836.¹¹³

To be sure, these first roads in Michigan were very primitive affairs, strap-railed and operated by horse power. The first locomotive, that used in 1837 on the Erie and Kalamazoo road between Adrian and Toledo, was comparatively a toy.¹¹⁴ The train on this line appears to have been fairly typical. The first passenger coach was called the "Pleasure Car," described as top heavy and always jumping the track. Passenger trains consisted of an engine and one coach which carried about twenty persons. The seats were benches along the sides of the coach and the door was on the side. There were no steps, the coaches being low and accessible from the ground. Later, double-decker coaches were introduced, the upper deck, for women, being furnished with sheepskin covered seats, while the lower deck, for the men, had only wooden seats. These cars would carry thirty-two passengers, sixteen on each deck. The first engines were about twenty horse power and six cars made a good sized freight train. The freight cars held only about two tons. The first train crews consisted of a fireman and an engineer. The fuel

¹¹¹ See editorials in the *Detroit Daily Advertiser* of July 26, August 12, and November 28, 1836.

¹¹² *Michigan house documents*, 1837, no. 9, p. 9. See for the projected system of internal improvements, *Session laws*, 1837, pp. 130-133; *House journal*, 1837, pp. 11-14, 114; *House documents*, 1837, no. 9, p. 1. For an expression of the popular sentiment see constitutional sanction in *Michigan legislative manual*, 1837, p. 45, art. 13, sec. 3.

¹¹³ For an account of the festivities celebrating the arrival of the first train at Ypsilanti, see *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 35: 394. A copy of the invitation issued by the commission of internal improvements to Mr. Ball to "take a seat in the cars" on this first trip is contained in *ibid.*, 38: 101. For the Southern railroad from Monroe westward on the line of the later Michigan Southern railroad, see *Michigan house documents*, 1837, no. 9, pp. 4-7; for the Northern railroad, on the later Detroit, Grand Haven, and Milwaukee road, see *ibid.*, 13-16.

¹¹⁴ *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 1: 232, 236; Farmer, *History of Detroit*, 1: 893.

was wood taken from the forests en route. Water for the engine was procured from the ditches.¹¹⁵

A word may be said about the government of the territory as an influence on settlement. Not much can be said of it as an asset in this relation. The opportunity for abuses, practically with immunity, were abundant, the powers of the government being ill-defined and the officials distant from Washington, with only themselves to report their conduct. Legislative, executive, and judicial powers were vested practically in the same persons, a small junto of four composed of the governor and three judges. Rarely were they in agreement; many are the accounts of their frequent and bitter broils. Many were the protests from the people.¹¹⁶ It is said that the citizens of Detroit were so disgusted with this misrule that they refused to vote for councilmen after the first election in 1806. Frequently they expressed their indignation through grand juries.¹¹⁷ In 1809 by this means they petitioned congress for a change in the form of government, asking for an elective legislature and a delegate to congress; but that body was busily engaged with the foreign affairs preceding the war of 1812, and not until the close of that conflict was a larger share in local government secured.¹¹⁸

The movement for a change in the form of the territorial government was strongly advocated in the *Detroit Gazette* with the purpose of "encouraging immigration, inducing settlement and developing the resources of the Territory." The increased expense would be an investment sure of rich returns, argues "Cincinnatus," in that paper for November 21, 1817, advocating change to a form "more congenial to the principles and feeling of the American people." "The government of this Territory, in its formation, is despotic — as it exists at present, it is anarchy," declares another writer.¹¹⁹ Governor Cass, thoroughly

¹¹⁵ Descriptions adapted from *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 38: 495-496. See *Michigan house documents*, 1837, no. 9 (A), 14-15, for a description of the process of building one of these primitive roads. A picture of the first train over the road from Detroit to Dearborn is given in *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 4: 516, and of the Erie and Kalamazoo train in *ibid.*, 38: opposite p. 494.

¹¹⁶ Ross and Catlin, *Landmarks of Detroit*, 283.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 288, 290-291.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 289.

¹¹⁹ October 28. See also the *Detroit Gazette* of 1817 for October 10, November 28, December 5, 12, 26, and January 2, 1818, for a series of articles on the misrule of the

democratic, desired complete popular rule, to be consummated for the territory as rapidly as the will of the people should permit.¹²⁰ But the French, suffering from the ravages of war, hated nothing so much as taxes, and had not the feeling for popular government characteristic of the "Yankee" immigrants. It was apparently the strength of their vote in 1818 that defeated the attempt to effect a change to the second grade of territorial government.¹²¹

The territory first elected a delegate to congress in 1819, when it was provided that all white males who had resided in Michigan one year prior to the date of election and who paid a territorial or county tax might vote at the election.¹²² The second important change was in 1823, when the legislative council was established, in the election of whose members the people were given a partial voice.¹²³ The complaints against the territorial officials published in the *Detroit Gazette* preceding this change make an almost continuous series of articles and editorials.¹²⁴ In fact they are continuous from its founding in 1817. These writings quoted in the eastern papers were detrimental to the immigration of those at least who were particular about living under good government. The *New York Commercial Advertiser*, quoted in the *Detroit Gazette* of December 27, 1822, declares that "Michigan is the worst governed State or Territory in the Union if half is true that has been published in the last three or four years and never contradicted."¹²⁵ In 1827 congress provided

governor and judges, signed "Rousseau." A writer in the issue of December 19, 1817, regrets the influence such writings must have on immigration. In the issue for January 13, 1818, a strong editorial sets forth the advantages of the second grade of territorial government.

¹²⁰ *Journal of the legislative council*, 1824, p. 8; *ibid.*, 1826, pp. 5-6.

¹²¹ *Detroit Gazette*, October 2, 1818; Campbell, *Political history of Michigan*, 391; Smith, *Life and times of Lewis Cass*, 113.

¹²² *Statutes at large*, 3: 482; *Detroit Gazette*, May 28, 1819.

¹²³ *Statutes at large*, 3: 769.

¹²⁴ The editorials first became trenchant in 1820. See a criticism of the editorial silence on abuses in the *Gazette* for August 11, 1820, followed August 25 by an editorial demand for an account, by the treasurer of the territory, of the expenditure of public money for the last five years.

¹²⁵ Judge Woodward was the center of the attack on the judges; see the severe and specific arraignment in the *Gazette* for November 1 and 8, 1822; but he published his defense in eastern papers, which led the *Gazette* to say that he appeared more desirous of being thought clean at Washington than in Michigan.

for the complete popular election of the legislative council, which was subject, however, to a check by the governor's veto and to congressional approval.¹²⁶ The territorial government thus inaugurated continued until the election of state officers in 1836.

The agitation for a change to state government began actively about 1831. An editorial in the *Detroit Gazette* for October 8, 1824, had prophesied that in view of the present progress of settlement, Michigan would be eligible for statehood in 1826. But progress was not quite so rapid. The *Detroit Free Press* of September 8, 1831, forecast a sufficient population "in a year or so." In 1832 a vote taken on the issue was favorable, though small, but congress declined to consider it.¹²⁷ As in 1818 and 1823 the French Canadians' fear of increase in taxes again furnished the strength of the negative vote.¹²⁸ The small size of the favorable majority indicated probably less a lack of interest on the part of eastern settlers than the distraction of attention from it by the cholera epidemic and the rumors of Indian uprisings. Regarding the franchise, it is worthy of note that for this occasion it was extended beyond the qualified electors to all males of age, excepting Indians and Negroes.¹²⁹

Increasing numbers in 1833-1834 again revived the agitation for statehood, and symptoms appeared of the attitude Michigan was to take in the later conflict over admission. "Even if congress omits to act in the case," says the editor of the *Detroit Journal and Michigan Advertiser*, October 29, 1834, "and appear to decline admitting her into the Union as a boon, we shall probably soon have proof that she may demand it as a right."¹³⁰ A census taken in 1834 revealed a population of 87,278.¹³¹ In 1835 a state constitution was adopted, a complete state government

¹²⁶ *Statutes at large*, 4: 200. The *Detroit Gazette* of June 18, 1824, contains very favorable comment on the recent work of the legislative council, publishing from this time forth the proceedings and laws of the council and the speeches of the governor.

¹²⁷ *Detroit Free Press*, October 18, 1832; *Detroit Courier*, March 13, 1833; Ross and Catlin, *Landmarks of Detroit*, 376.

¹²⁸ *Detroit Free Press*, October 11, 1832; *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 22: 484; 28: 171.

¹²⁹ Campbell, *Political history of Michigan*, 435.

¹³⁰ See other editorial discussions in the same paper for November 5, 12, 19, 26, December 4, etc., 1834, and frequently from then forward.

¹³¹ Blois, *Gazetteer of Michigan*, 150.

was elected, and Michigan claimed under the ordinance of 1787 to be a state, awaiting only congressional action on its right to admission into the union. The popular sentiment in favor of state government is reflected in the vote of six to one for the adoption of the new constitution in 1835, and as settlement increased in 1835-1836 mainly from New York and New England, the sentiment for statehood brought from the older states grew stronger in Michigan. For over a year, however, Michigan continued to be technically a territory, at least not a state in the union, though its people lived under the new constitution.¹³² The constitution adopted may fairly be taken to express the general feeling of the people regarding popular rights. Among other things, it required that a voter must be a white male, above twenty-one years of age, a citizen or resident in Michigan at the time of the adoption of the constitution, and a resident of the state six months preceding the election.¹³³ The franchise was extended to all aliens then in Michigan, but a residence of five years was required of new comers.¹³⁴ Alpheus White, a native of Ireland, appears to have been largely instrumental in getting an extension of the suffrage to aliens then residing in the territory.¹³⁵

Settlers coming from the East to Michigan must have recognized in the laws of the territory much with which they were familiar, since by reason of their origin the laws reflected on the whole the spirit of the East.¹³⁶ A writer who has made a special

¹³² There is a good brief analysis of the constitution of 1835 in Cooley's *Michigan*, 299-303; also in *Michigan as province, territory and state*, 3: 43-53. The issue of the admission of Michigan afforded an instructive expression of state rights in the West, taking some time to settle because of being compromised with the slavery question, the admission of Arkansas, and the boundary controversy with Ohio.

A good brief digest of the legislation of 1835-1837 bearing upon the settlement and development of Michigan is contained in *ibid.*, 69, 77-89. See also the two volumes of *Session laws*, 1835-1836, and 1837.

¹³³ *Michigan legislative manual*, 1837, p. 30.

¹³⁴ Michigan Political Science Association, *Publications*, 1: 130; a number of newspaper articles appeared in 1836 bearing on the right of foreign immigrants to vote. See the *Detroit Journal and Courier*, July 1, 1835.

¹³⁵ *Michigan biographies* (Lansing, 1888), 685.

¹³⁶ In some cases the intent of congress to restrict the legislation of the governor and judges to such as could be found on the statute books of the states was frustrated by an ingenious patchwork method of piecing together sentences and phrases from those laws. This was one of the abuses complained of.

study of this feature, finds that they were derived in about equal proportions from Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, and Virginia.¹³⁷ Punishment at the whipping post was derived from the laws of Vermont.¹³⁸ As late as 1832 a public whipping of fifteen lashes on the bare back appears to have been administered in the public square of Monroe village.¹³⁹ At the close of the period a movement for the abolition of imprisonment for debt had gained headway, of which the publication of Whittier's poem, "The prisoner for debt" in a Detroit paper is a reflection, and in 1837 a law was passed to that effect.¹⁴⁰

Of first rate importance to settlement were the provisions for county, township, and village government. The establishment of counties ran far ahead of settlement, it being the intention apparently to invite settlement and to avoid the difficulties that would attend the running of county lines after settlers should have located farms.¹⁴¹ In a rough way, the rate of county organization may be taken to indicate the rate of settlement.¹⁴² Popular participation in county government was granted by congress in 1825, when the qualified electors were authorized to choose all county officers except judges.¹⁴³

The democratic character of local government was no small inducement to settlers, especially to the freedom-loving foreigner who came hither to enjoy what he could not obtain in the

¹³⁷ E. W. Bemis, *Local government in Michigan and the Northwest* (Johns Hopkins University studies, 1st ser., 5—Baltimore, 1883), 10. At the close of most of the territorial laws is a statement of the source from which they are derived, usually naming merely the state.

¹³⁸ Mathews, *Expansion of New England*, 223.

¹³⁹ Wing, *History of Monroe county*, 140; punishment by whipping was abolished in the territory by statute in 1831. *Territorial laws*, 3: 904.

¹⁴⁰ *Session laws*, 1837, p. 299. However, Chief Justice Fletcher, in the work known from its compiler as "Fletcher's Code," embodied the old law, and the new one was reenacted in 1839. *Session laws*, 1839, p. 76.

¹⁴¹ *Territorial laws*, 2: 798-800; *Detroit Gazette*, editorial of September 13, 1822.

¹⁴² A very good brief study of the expansion of Michigan based on county organization has been made by Mr. Mark W. Jefferson in *Report of the Michigan Academy of Science*, 1902, pp. 88-91. See plates in *Farmer's History of Detroit*, 1: 119, 120. For the establishment of the first counties and their unequal areas, see W. L. Jenks, in *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 38: 447; also *Territorial laws*, 1: 121, 122, 323, 325, 327, 328; 2: 295.

¹⁴³ *Statutes at large*, 4: 80; for legislation affecting the establishment of county seats, see *Territorial laws*, 3: 840; *Session laws*, 1835-1836, p. 81; *ibid*, 1837, pp. 268, 287.

fatherland. In 1825 congress gave to the governor and council of the territory the power to divide the counties into townships,¹⁴⁴ and in the year 1827 this power was extensively used.¹⁴⁵ Township government sometimes preceded county government by a number of years, as in Grand Blanc township in Genesee county,¹⁴⁶ and Allegan township in Allegan county.¹⁴⁷ The Michigan town meeting combined with the powers of the New England town meeting the organization of the New York county board.¹⁴⁸

The successive variations in the areas of the political townships has naturally much significance as an indication of settlement. The earliest of these townships were sometimes of great extent. Some of them included several counties, as the township of Greene, humorously famous among pioneers¹⁴⁹ for its size. Frequently the first political township in a county was coterminous with the county, and this large township would be later subdivided along the lines of the government townships into political townships of varying areas.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁴ Lanman, *History of Michigan*, 228.

¹⁴⁵ *Territorial laws*, 2: 477. See comments of the *Detroit Gazette* of March 6, 1827, on the proceedings of the legislative council regarding township government. Their opinion of the importance of the subject is attested by the time given to it, greater than to any other measure since the organization of the council. *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 3: 434.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 3: 434.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 17: 558.

¹⁴⁸ Mathews, *Expansion of New England*, 236, quoting E. W. Bemis, *Local government in Michigan and the Northwest*, 14-17; cf. *Territorial laws*, 2: 317, 640. See the discussion in the *Detroit Gazette*, February 27, 1827, for contemporary opinion as to the respective merits of the New England and New York plans of township government. The *Michigan Herald* of January 17, 1827, states that a majority of citizens prefer the New York system of township government because cheaper and more convenient; the same paper for February 28, 1827, contains an article against the New York plan.

¹⁴⁹ *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 10: 63; *Territorial laws*, 2: 787. For the very extensive townships in northern counties see *ibid.*, 2: 480-481.

¹⁵⁰ As a small political area organized on petition of the people for township government, the township indexes population on a smaller scale than does the county; hence it is supplementary as a measure of settlement within the counties. The name, date, position, size, and boundaries of a township may tell much. The date and position of the first townships that were organized in a county are quite certain evidence of where the bulk of the population was distributed, and the relative rate of township organization is fairly dependable as a means of contrasting the larger features of settlement within the counties. The names and boundaries of townships may often give a clue to the motives of settlement and to the sources of the popula-

In the educational and cultural advantages offered by Michigan territory there was not much to invite settlers.¹⁵¹ The importance of this element as an inducement to settlers, however, should be duly appreciated. Many of the leading pioneers had been educated in eastern schools and colleges, and the universal respect for education is shown by the social status of the teacher, which was equal to that of the minister, lawyer, or physician. The influence of the devoted pioneer priests and preachers, like Father Gabriel Richard, John Monteith, and John D. Pierce, in elevating the general tone of social life must have been considerable.¹⁵² It was probably a general sentiment among intending emigrants that was reflected in an editorial of the *North-western Journal* of January 13, 1830, commenting on the "multiplication of schools, of places of worship, of religious teachers, and the improvement of the moral habits of the people"; to the effect that "there are very many by whom a satisfactory answer to the questions 'can we educate our children there, and enjoy ourselves and secure to them the blessings of Sabbath instruction,' would be demanded before they would determine to emigrate."

Though the foundations of Michigan's public school system, at least in practice, were laid after Michigan became a state, something was done by legislation in the earlier period. National land grants for schools provided a part of the financial basis both for primary and higher education.¹⁵³ Governor Cass had the thorough-going New England sense of the importance of educating the masses as a basis for citizenship and did his

tion. But caution must be used in basing judgments upon the relative areas of township. Relative size, area for area, is likely to be very misleading and should be compared with other evidence. Small townships naturally give the impression of density of population and the larger ones the impression of sparseness. A township diagram of any county for any census will invariably give evidence that relativity of area is not of itself a safe guide to relative density of population. Townships have varied in size for sundry reasons — physiographic, ethnic, economic, and social — and various other conditions have influenced feeling about who should be included in the townships.

¹⁵¹ *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 7: 36-51.

¹⁵² J. D. Hoyt and R. C. Ford, *John D. Pierce, founder of the Michigan school system* (Ypsilanti, 1905), 40-41, 44-46.

¹⁵³ A. C. McLaughlin, *History of higher education in Michigan* (Washington, 1891), 17, 18; *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 7: 19.

utmost to promote schools.¹⁵⁴ It is probable that his inspiration was back of the apparent awakening of interest in public education reflected in the legislation of 1827 providing for common schools in the townships.¹⁵⁵

However, the log school house built by the settlers, meagerly equipped, and probably frequently officered by school masters of the type of Ichabod Crane, remained throughout this period the sole public educational advantage within reach of the vast majority of children.¹⁵⁶ Academies appeared at Pontiac, Ann Arbor, and a few other centers of settlement.¹⁵⁷ The Ann Arbor Academy had a considerable reputation, drawing pupils from prominent families in Detroit.¹⁵⁸ Some slight beginnings that looked towards a university made their appearance.¹⁵⁹ Toward the end of the period there were formulated those plans of Isaac E. Crary and John D. Pierce which, appearing first in spirit in the state constitution of 1835, were brought to practical realization by the earliest state legislation,¹⁶⁰ and were to mean much for later settlement.

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¹⁵⁴ McLaughlin, *Lewis Cass*, 123, citing *Journal of the legislative council*, 1826, pp. 5-6.

¹⁵⁵ *Territorial laws*, 2: 472; see also *ibid.*, 3: 1012, 1377. A brief review of territorial school legislation in Michigan is given in *Michigan joint documents*, 1880, pp. 307-309; and of the organization of the territorial school system in Hoyt and Ford, *John D. Pierce*, 47-52.

¹⁵⁶ *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 1:429. See the sketch of a typical pioneer school of about this time at Ypsilanti, probably of the better type, "Annual report of the superintendent of public instruction, 1880," in *Michigan joint documents*, 1880, pp. 306-307. The visitation was made in 1839 by the editor of an eastern school paper, *The Common School Assistant*, in whose columns for September of that year his report appeared—good teachers, but poor ventilation, bad desks and seats, windows poor, ceilings low, and the settlers unwilling to have any change made.

¹⁵⁷ *Territorial laws*, 3: 849, 879, 881, 975, 992, 1069, 1120, 1205, 1379.

¹⁵⁸ *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 1: 400.

¹⁵⁹ *Territorial laws*, 1: 879, 2: 104; McLaughlin, *Higher education in Michigan*, 29-31; *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 7: 37; M. B. Hinsdale and I. N. Demmon, *History of the University of Michigan*, *passim*; *Michigan joint documents*, 1880, pp. 353-355, 358, 360-363.

¹⁶⁰ *Michigan pioneer and historical collections*, 1: 38; 5: 184-187; McLaughlin, *Higher education in Michigan*, 34-35; *Michigan legislative manual*, 1837, pp. 43, 44, art. 10, sec. 2, 3. Hoyt and Ford, *John D. Pierce*, 79-87; *Michigan joint documents*, 1880, pp. 309-313.